Plantation labour in the country

2084. SHRI GUNDAPPA KORWAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of plantation labour State-wise;

(b) the average annual income of plantation labourers;

(c) the details of committees/ commissions constituted by Government to study the problems faced by the plantation labourers; and

(d) the details of the recommendation made thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Funds for child labour projects

2085. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of children of the country suffer from deprivation and neglect due to paucity of funds;

(b) whether according to child labour Action Network, a donation of a rupee per day by 1% of the population of the country will amount to Rs. 8.4 million per day for the purpose;

(c) whether Government propose to implement this proposal to ensure more funds for child welfare projects; and

(d) if so, when?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) to (d) As per information furnished by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Women and Child Development), while no specific information is maintained as asked for, the problems of the suffering children of the country are addressed through their various schemes/programmes such as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme, National Plan of Action on Children, Balwadi Nutrition Programme, Creche Scheme and National Creche Fund.

Hike in visa fees by the Saudi Arabian Government and its impact on Indian labour

2086. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Saudi Arabian Government has hiked its Visa Stamp fee from Rs. 450 to Rs. 9,500 in December, 1994;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this hike has adversely affected the migration of workers from the country to Saudi Arabia;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any measure to maintain the status quo; and

(d) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) to (d) The Government of Saudi Arabia has increased employment visa fee from SR. 50/- to SR. 1000/- in December, 1994. The Government have received a number of representations stating that this hike might adversely affect migration of workers to Saudi Arabia. The Government had held a meeting with the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia in India on 23.2.1995. The Ambassador clarified that the employment visa fee was to be paid by the employer and not by the workers. The hike in employment visa fee has been levied to ensure that only those Saudi employers who were genuinely in need of overseas workmen should employ them. He further clarified that if any employer is found demanding visa fees from the worker directly or through Recruiting Agents, deterrent action would be taken by the Government of Saudi Arabia. An ad-hoc committee with